

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 and 19-24 are pending in this application.

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 11-15, 19, 20 and 23 are allowed.

Applicants believe that claim 22 is also allowed, because claim 22 depends from claim 19.

By this Amendment, claim 16 is amended to recite additional features disclosed in the specification, for example, page 9, line 23-page 10, line 3. Claim 16 is also amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 18. Claim 18 is canceled. No new matter is added.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 16-18 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over EP 0260703 to Hartmann et al.; and rejects claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hartmann in view of JP 2001-109533 to Kazuya et al. (The rejection of claim 22 is not addressed here, because claim 22 is believed to have been indicated to be allowed, as discussed above.) These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Hartmann is only directed to suspending a honeycomb structure on an air cushion. Hartmann does not disclose or suggest contacting the faces of the honeycomb structure with the faces of the cradle.

Claim 16 is amended to recite "the face of the outer wall contacting the faces of the cradle." Thus, claim 16 is patentable over Hartmann. Also, Kazuya does not supply the subject matter lacking in Hartmann. Thus, claim 16 is patentable over Hartmann and Kazuya, either individually or in combination.

Furthermore, claim 16 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 18. As recognized in the Office Action, it would not be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include a cut at the apex of the V-shaped cradle (see page 3 "Allowable Subject Matter" of the Office Action.) Thus, the applied references do not disclose or suggest "wherein the cradle has faces for receiving the formed body and having a

V-shaped cross section with a cut at an apex of the V shape," as recited in claim 18, and currently incorporated in claim 16.

For at least the above reasons, claim 16 defines patentable subject matter over the applied references. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 16, and claims 17, 21 and 24 depending therefrom, under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-17 and 19-24 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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